

Message Text

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ORIGIN AF-18

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C O N F I D E N T I A L STATE 147952

E.O. 11652: GDS

TAGS: PFOR, US

SUBJECT: SECRETARY ROGERS-MALAGASY FOREIGN MINISTER
MEETING

1. SUMMARY: DURING CONVERSATION WITH SECRETARY JULY 25, MALAGASY FOREIGN MINISTER STRESSED IMPORTANCE OF ASSURING MALAGASY NEUTRALITY NOW THAT GOMR FOREIGN POLICY IS OPENING IN ALL DIRECTIONS. SECRETARY SAID USG WILL RESPECT MALAGASY NEUTRALITY. END SUMMARY.

2. MALAGASY FOREIGN MINISTER RATSIRAKA MET WITH SECRETARY JULY 25. DR. RATSIMANDRESY, AMB. RAHARIJOANA, ASSISTANT SECRETARY NEWSOM AND AF/C DIRECTOR COHEN ALSO PRESENT.

3. RATSIRAKA SAID THAT SINCE HIS LAST MEETING WITH SECRETARY AT UNGA LAST OCTOBER, MADAGASCAR HELD REFERENDUM WHICH DEMONSTRATED OVERWHELMING POPULAR APPROVAL OF
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RAMANANTSOA GOVT. RATSIRAKA SAID GOMR HAS DECIDED ADOPT

FOREIGN POLICY REACHING OUT IN ALL DIRECTIONS (TOUTS AZIMUTHS). ON BASIS THIS NEW POLICY, MADAGASCAR HAS DECIDED CUT DOMINATING TIES WITH OTHER POWERS. THIS POLICY WAS BEHIND DECISION TO REVISE AGREEMENTS WITH FRANCE. "BECAUSE WE WANTED TO DECOLONIZE RELATIONS WITH FRANCE," RATSIRAKA SAID, "MADAGASCAR LEFT THE FRANC ZONE."

4. IN CONTEXT OF NEW FOREIGN POLICY, RATSIRAKA CONTINUED, AND IN VIEW OF MADAGASCAR'S STRATEGIC SITUATION, MALAGASY GOVT HAS NO CHOICE BUT NEUTRALITY. AT THE PRESENT TIME, MADAGASCAR IS "NON-ALIGNED," BUT EXPECTS IN NEAR FUTURE TO MAKE DECLARATION OF NEUTRALITY. IF FOUR GREAT POWERS--USA, SOVIET UNION, CHINA AND WESTERN EUROPE--AGREE TO GUARANTEE MALAGASY NEUTRALITY, EVERYTHING WILL BE FINE.

5. SECRETARY RESPONDED THAT USG HAS FOLLOWED EVENTS IN MADAGASCAR CLOSELY, AND WE ARE PLEASED THAT US-GOMR RELATIONS ARE SO GOOD. USG WILL RESPECT MALAGASY NEUTRALITY, BUT WE NOT SURE WHAT MINISTER MEANS BY "GUARANTEE."

6. RATSIRAKA REPLIED THAT SOME COUNTRIES, LIKE SWITZERLAND, ARE NEUTRAL EITHER BECAUSE THEY ARE STRONG ENOUGH TO PROTECT THEIR NEUTRALITY OR BECAUSE THEY HAVE PERSUADED OTHER COUNTRIES TO RESPECT THEIR NEUTRALITY. RESPECT OF NEUTRALITY BY OTHER POWERS IS THEREFORE ONE FORM OF A GUARANTEE. MADAGASCAR MUST HAVE SUCH A PROMISE FROM FOUR POWERS CITED IF NEUTRALITY IS TO BE EFFECTIVE. WITH SECRETARY'S PLEDGE ON BEHALF OF USA, THREE POWERS HAVE NOW SAID THEY WOULD RESPECT NEUTRALITY. THERE IS ONE MORE PROMISE TO OBTAIN (NAME OF COUNTRY NOT MENTIONED).

7. SECRETARY SUMMED UP US POLICY TOWARD MADAGASCAR AS FOLLOWS:

(A) RESPECT FOR MALAGASY NEUTRALITY.

(B) NO INTERFERENCE IN INTERNAL AFFAIRS OF MADAGASCAR.

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(C) BILATERAL COOPERATION IN SPECIFIC AREAS IF WE HAVE THE MEANS AND ABILITY TO DO SO.

8. NEWSOM ASKED RATSIRAKA IF NEUTRALITY POLICY MEANS SHIPS OF ALL NAVIES WILL HAVE RIGHT TO MAKE CALLS AT AND UTILIZE FACILITIES OF DIEGO SUAREZ. RATSIRAKA SAID YES, BUT OBJECTIVE OF SUCH VISITS MUST BE COMPLETELY CONSISTENT WITH NEUTRALITY POLICY. SHIP VISITS MUST BE

ON BASIS OF INNOCENT PASSAGE. SHIPS ENROUTE TO ENGAGE IN
ACTS OF WAR AGAINST OTHER COUNTRIES IN THE REGION WOULD
NOT BE WELCOME. ROGERS

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